

the mercy-seat. They belong to secret societies and clans, but they do not know the secret of the Lord, which is with them that fear him. They may have education, and all that learning can give them, but without prayer they will be like sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. They may be abundant in labor, fervid in speech, and zealous in good works, but all this will not avail unless they have that power and that presence which comes only in answer to prayer.

Let Christians learn the lesson, and as they desire to be useful and to do effective work for God, let them see to it that they watch and pray, that they continue instant in prayer, and thus draw from heaven that power and help without which they can do nothing and without which, all they undertake to do will amount to nothing in the end.

#### The Ministry of Little Things

J. M. Buckley.

In these days we have become accustomed to doing and to seeing things done on a large scale. It is the largest ship that attracts and absorbs attention, the highest building, the heaviest locomotive, the longest bridge, the deepest mine, the greatest corporation; and there is that in the atmosphere which makes it easy and almost natural for men to live, move, and have their being in superlatives that are related to the idea of vastness. To turn aside and devote one's attention to things of a humble sphere, even tho of as much importance, and perchance of more, is to be confronted by an impatient spirit and an instinctive unwillingness to perform the less ostentatious part. Most people seem to prefer to stand in the front row and to sit in the chief places, and whether they are worthy to do so or are entitled to the distinction such conspicuousness involves, is a secondary consideration. They forget the reproof administered by our Lord to those who richly deserved it in his day: "Woe unto you, Pharisees; for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets."

But it is not so much a desire to appear other and higher than they are that afflicts so many people, among whom are not a few well-meaning Christians, as it is an unwillingness to devote themselves to the minor ministries of life. It is to be presumed that a Christian, above all men, has a firm purpose in his heart to live the best life—the one yielding the greatest satisfaction to himself and the greatest benefit to his fellowmen. This sort of life is always one of ministry—service, and follows as closely as possible in the line marked out by the career of Him "who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Now, it is quite remarkable that the work performed by the Master for the benefit of individuals was usually of a humble sort. He wrought many miracles, and the people were astonished thereat, and these deeds were heralded far and wide; but as He went about from place to place doing good He must have performed a vast num-

ber of lesser services, of which only comparatively few persons were cognizant. And this was in accord with His Spirit, for He repeatedly required those whom He had helped to say nothing to any person about it, and more than once He charged the happy one who had been delivered from some physical or spiritual infirmity that he should not make Him known.

The humility of Jesus in this respect is well worthy of imitation on the part of His disciples. Many young converts, in the ardor of their new love for their Saviour, express a willingness to do anything for His sake, but often when an opportunity for some humble and apparently insignificant service presents itself they hesitate, and, as the crucial moment of the opportunity passes, they become indifferent, or try to believe that the chance for service was not, after all, of much importance or value. And this is true of many who have been longer in the way. They are quite ready to do a great thing, or attempt to do it, but are not willing to cast themselves into the performance of the humbler service.

If we did not measure our work by human standards we might see the real relations of things more clearly. With men a single achievement is sometimes so distorted as to fill the whole heavens. They speak of it as great and really come to believe it great, although according to the standard of God, it may be of relatively insignificant value; while a deed which receives no attention from men, and for which there is no applause, may be sealed with divine approval, and cause the angels to rejoice; and in the outworking of the divine plans for the redemption of men it may become truly great, and even sublime. We are inclined to forget, too, that through the performance of the humbler task we develop the ability required for the performance of the so-called greater. This is a natural law which finds expression on every hand, and in no department of human activity is it more forcibly manifested than in the practical affairs of the Christian life. To him who has employed his talents faithfully and well in the Master's service even though they be of an apparently indifferent sort, shall be given the ability and the opportunity for the larger service with the larger talent. But one must be willing to do the smaller and simpler service first. The student can know nothing of the profound scientific problems of astronomy unless he has already mastered the simpler forms of mathematics; nor can one expect to do great things for God and humanity until he has learned to do, and is willing to do, the smaller things.

There is a wonderful potency in the littles of life, since it is these that exercise the determining influences, as a general thing. Not many lives are affected for good or ill by what are usually spoken of as great movements; indeed, most great movements are but the natural development and fruitage of things small and humble. A cup of cold

water is an insignificant thing, and not worth saying anything about, but it is dignified into greatness when the Master says of it, "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." To feed the hungry, to relieve the thirsty, to receive the stranger, to clothe the naked, to visit the sick and the prisoner—these are humble services, and not much is said of them before the world, but those who engage in them in the Master's name have the supreme satisfaction of knowing that they are doing His work, and theirs will be the ineffable joy of hearing the King say unto them, "Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

If the things we do were related only to this life it might be different, but as every act of our lives is related in some mysterious and essential way to the life to come, this present life becomes a serious affair. As the majority of people are unable, because of their limitations, to accomplish the great things, but are able, no matter how humble the sphere of their activity, to do the little things, it is the duty, as it should be the privilege, of everyone who acknowledges himself to be a disciple of Jesus Christ to do with all his heart whatever his hand finds to do; and if the "whatever" should be confined to the little ministries of life, the privileges of this kind of service should be sought after the more eagerly.

"The memory of a kindly word long, long gone by,  
The fragrance of a fading flower, sent lovingly,  
The gleaming of a sudden smile or sudden tear,  
The warmer pressure of the hand, the tone of cheer,  
The hush that means 'I cannot speak, but I have heard!'  
The note that only bears a verse from God's own word:  
Such minor things we hardly count as ministry,  
The givers deeming they have shown scant sympathy;  
But when the heart is overwrought—O, who can tell  
The power of little things like these to make it well?"

## Among the Churches

### Iowa Notes

On August 15 I arrived in Brother John A. Myers' church in Iowa county and continued for one week. Brother Myers had been preaching about ten days and had occasion during this time to show the fallacy of the Advent doctrine of the Sabbath. Brother Myers is said to be an authority on this error and gave it a serious examination. The Advent elder had been in there two weeks and had disturbed the minds of some of our young people who had never given the subject of the Sabbath any study. But after Brother Myers was thru, they all were sure that Sabbatarianism is an error.

Our stay among this people was very pleasant. They are a large hearted people. As a result of the meetings seven were baptized the day before I left and three more had signified their intention to unite with the church. Five who had once been